

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SUPPORTERS OF S.S. MANN
BEATEN UP IN TARN TARAN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, on December 3, supporters of the former member of India's Parliament, Simranjit Singh Mann, were beaten up in the town of Tarn Taran in Punjab, which Mr. Mann used to represent in parliament.

Mr. Mann was burned in effigy. He has blamed former Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal for the incident. Badal's party is aligned with the Bharatiya Janata Party, BJP, the former ruling party, which is under the umbrella of the fascist, Hindu militant Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh, RSS.

The Hindu extremists attacked Mr. Mann's supporters and Mann's supporters were the ones who got arrested.

Tarn Taran is a central place in Sikhism, built by the fifth of the Sikh gurus, Guru Arjun Dev, and there is a historic Gurdwara—Sikh place of worship—in the town. The fact that supporters of the RSS are able to beat Sikhs in Tarn Taran is distressing. It shows the need for Sikh independence in a sovereign Khalistan.

According to SS News online, at least six people were injured in the clash, which broke out after one of Mann's supporters wrote an article critical of Shiv Sena, one of the militant branches of the RSS.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, president of the Council of Khalistan, has issued an excellent press release on the incident. He notes that a free, sovereign Khalistan, the Sikh homeland that declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987, would help put an end to incidents like this. As long as Sikhs are under Indian subjugation, the RSS and its allies are going to be able to run roughshod over Sikhs and other minorities. Remember that last year, 35 Sikhs were arrested simply for making pro-Khalistan speeches and raising the Khalistani flag. Since when are making speeches and raising a flag crimes in a democracy?

India has killed more than a quarter of a million Sikhs, over 90,000 Kashmiri Muslims, 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims in Gujarat, over 300,000 Christians in Nagaland and tens of thousands of other minorities such as Assamese, Bodos, Dalits, Manipuris, Tamils, and others. If India is the democracy that it claims to be, how can it do such things?

America is the beacon of freedom, Mr. Speaker. That is why we need to act. Incidents like this must not be allowed to continue. We should stop our aid to India and end our trade with that country until human rights are respected for all people there. And we should put the Congress on record in support of a free and fair plebiscite on independence in Khalistan, Kashmir, Nagalim, and wherever else it is sought. That is the best way to help

bring freedom, security, safety, dignity, and prosperity to all the people of South Asia.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to put the Council of Khalistan's press release on the beating of Mann supporters in the RECORD at this time.

WASHINGTON, DC, Dec. 7, 2006.—Supporters of former Member of Parliament Simranjit Singh Mann were beaten up in Tarn Taran by members of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Mr. Mann's effigy was burned. Mann has publicly blamed former Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal, who is allied with the BJP, a branch of the fascist Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), for the beating. Mann was elected to represent Tarn Taran in the Indian Parliament with 95 percent of the vote while he was in jail in 1989.

Tarn Taran is the center of the Sikh religion. Guru Arjun Dev Ji, the fifth Sikh Guru, established Tarn Taran and there is a historic Gurdwara there. Captain Amarinder Singh, the chief minister of Punjab, is establishing a Guru Arjun Dev Ji University there.

"It is outrageous that supporters of Mann could be beaten up and his effigy burned in a place so central for the Sikh Nation as Tarn Taran," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. "We hope that Badal is not behind the incident," said Dr. Aulakh. "If he is, shame on him. Ultimately, the Indian government is behind this act and both Badal and Mann are under the control of the Indian government, as their letters published in Chakravayuh: Web of Indian Secularism demonstrate," said Dr. Aulakh. In one letter, Mann pledges, "I reiterate my allegiance to the Constitution and I stand by the integrity of the country." On his trip to the United States in 2000, Mann attended a Sikh event and said, "Close the offices of the Council of Khalistan, headed by Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh in Washington DC."

"If the BJP can carry out its nefarious activities in a place as central to the Sikh Nation as Tarn Taran, then the handwriting is on the wall for the future of the Sikh Nation. They cannot protect their respect and honor and they are slaves in India. This shows why we must liberate Khalistan from Indian occupation and oppression," said Dr. Aulakh. "That is the only way for Sikhs to protect ourselves from India's brutality."

After human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra exposed the Indian government's policy of mass cremation of Sikhs, in which over 50,000 Sikhs have been arrested, tortured, and murdered, then their bodies were declared unidentifiable and secretly cremated, the police kidnapped him. Khalra was murdered in police custody. No one has been brought to justice for the kidnapping and murder of Jaswant Singh Khalra. Rajiv Singh Randhawa, who was the only witness to the Khalra kidnapping, has been repeatedly subjected to police harassment. This includes being arrested for trying to hand a piece of paper to then-British Home Secretary Jack Straw in front of the Golden Temple. The police never released the body of former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Gurdev Singh Kaunke after SSP Swaran Singh Ghotna murdered him.

In 1994, the U.S. State Department reported that the Indian government had paid over 41,000 cash bounties for killing Sikhs. A report by the Movement Against State Re-

pression (MASR) quotes the Punjab Civil Magistracy as writing "if we add up the figures of the last few years the number of innocent persons killed would run into lakhs [hundreds of thousands.]" The Indian Supreme Court called the Indian government's murders of Sikhs "worse than a genocide."

The MASR report states that 52,268 Sikhs are being held as political prisoners in India without charge or trial, mostly under a repressive law known as the "Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act" (TADA), which expired in 1995. Many have been in illegal custody since 1984! There has been no list published of those who were acquitted under TADA and those who are still rotting in Indian jails. Tens of thousands of other minorities are also being held as political prisoners, according to Amnesty International. Last year, 35 Sikhs were charged and arrested in Punjab for making speeches in support of Khalistan and raising the Khalistani flag. "How can making speeches and raising a flag be considered crimes in a democratic society?" asked Dr. Aulakh.

India is on the verge of disintegration. Kashmir is about to separate from India. As L.K. Advani said, "if Kashmir goes, India goes." History shows that multinational states such as India are doomed to failure. "Countries like Austria-Hungary, India's longtime friend the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and others prove this point. India is not one country; it is a polyglot like those countries, thrown together for the convenience of the British colonialists. It is doomed to break up as they did. There is nothing in common in the culture of a Hindu living in Bengal and one in Tamil Nadu, let alone between them and the minority nations of South Asia," Dr. Aulakh said.

"Freedom is the God-given right of every nation and every human being," said Dr. Aulakh. Sikhs must be allowed to have a free and fair plebiscite on the issue of Khalistan. In a democracy, you cannot continue to rule against the wishes of the people. As former Senator George Mitchell said about the Palestinians, "the essence of democracy is the right to self-determination." We must reclaim the sovereignty of the Sikh Nation," Dr. Aulakh said. "Currently, there are 17 freedom movements within India's borders. It has 18 official languages. A country having 18 official languages cannot hold its people together for very long," he said. "We hope that India's breakup will be peaceful like Czechoslovakia's, not violent like Yugoslavia's," Dr. Aulakh said. "Earlier this year, Montenegro, which has less than a million people, became a sovereign country and a member of the United Nations," he said. "Now it is the time for the Sikh Nation of Punjab, Khalistan to become independent."

Dr. Aulakh stressed his commitment to the peaceful, democratic, nonviolent struggle to liberate Khalistan. "The only way that the repression will stop and Sikhs will live in freedom, dignity, and prosperity is to liberate Khalistan," said Dr. Aulakh. "As Professor Darshan Singh, former Jathedar of the Akal Takht, said, 'If a Sikh is not a Khalistani, he is not a Sikh,'" Dr. Aulakh said. "We must free Khalistan now."

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
LANE EVANS, MEMBER OF CON-
GRESS

SPEECH OF

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2006

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in honoring the service of a highly effective and respected 24-year Member of Congress, on the occasion of his departure. I am grateful that I have been able to serve with Congressman LANE EVANS, who has long been a champion of working people and will always be remembered as a special champion of our Nation's veterans. The American people and our veterans are particularly fortunate indeed that Congressman EVANS served as ranking member of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, beginning in 1995.

I associate myself with the remarks of my colleagues, who have spoken of LANE'S many accomplishments during his tenure here. He has adroitly used his legislative skills and concern to the benefit and well-being of the American people during his entire service, but his single-minded concentration on veterans' issues made that in many ways his very own issue. LANE'S experience in the Marine Corps, his service in Vietnam, and the affects of military service on the families of enlisted men and women never left LANE EVANS.

Over the course of his career, Congressman EVANS led a successful effort to pass legislation compensating Vietnam veterans for diseases linked to Agent Orange exposure, secured passage of legislation that provides health and compensation benefits for children of veterans exposed to Agent Orange, and co-sponsored legislation to ban the use of anti-personnel landmines which kill and maim people worldwide. It is no wonder that Congressman EVANS was named the recipient of the Vietnam Veterans of America's first annual Presidents Award for Outstanding Achievement, as well as the prestigious AMVET Silver Helmet Award.

I am pleased and proud to have served with Congressman LANE EVANS. I am certain that constituents and family are especially proud of his many accomplishments. LANE goes home with the best wishes and gratitude of Republicans and Democrats alike in this House.

HONORING CATHERINE LAMY, RE-
CIPIENT OF THE ART PORTFOLIO
SILVER AWARD

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Catherine Lamy, an outstanding young artist from my district and recipient of the Art Portfolio Silver Award. This award, presented by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, recognizes outstanding talent and creativity displayed by young artists and writers.

Under the guidance of her instructor at Stagg High School, Mr. Wesley Gonzalez, Catherine has created a remarkable portfolio, including eight award-winning pieces that are

acclaimed by the Alliance. These pieces clearly demonstrate her incredible ability and potential as an up-and-coming artist. As a recipient of this award, Catherine serves as an example to other young students who aspire to advance their creativity as a life path.

This year, the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers recognized a total of 1,448 students in the organization's Scholastic Art & Writing Awards in New York City. The students were honored by their peers at Carnegie Hall, where they had an opportunity to review the work of other students and meet with professional artists and writers.

It is my honor today to recognize Catherine Lamy as one of the outstanding young creative minds in our country, I am also pleased to acknowledge the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers for their work in encouraging the talent of young people. We must continue to encourage, foster, and recognize the skills and abilities of our Nation's youth not only on special occasions, but on a daily basis.

HONORING HOLLOWAY HIGH
SCHOOL AS A NO CHILD LEFT
BEHIND BLUE RIBBON AWARD
WINNER

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the students, faculty and staff of Holloway High School for earning a 2006 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Award for academic superiority.

Located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Holloway High School serves 176 Rutherford County students who have fallen behind academically but have a sincere desire to catch up and graduate. The school was named a Blue Ribbon school by the U.S. Department of Education for scoring in the top 10 percent of all schools in Tennessee for 3 consecutive years.

No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon schools are selected by the U.S. Department of Education as a way to recognize schools across the country that show either high achievement or dramatic improvement.

Principal Ivan Duggin says the school will continue to evolve and do whatever it takes to remain one of the top schools in the state of Tennessee and the country. Mr. Duggin has said, "We will not rest on success. We will constantly be focused and seeking to find the best people, practices and strategies which will yield superior results."

This award is evidence of the hard work put forth by the faculty, students and staff at Holloway High School. I am truly proud of them for their efforts, and I commend them on this achievement.

IN RECOGNITION OF RIDGEWOOD
PROPERTY OWNERS AND CIVIC
ASSOCIATION

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the floor of the U.S. House of Representa-

tives to recognize the 75th anniversary of the Ridgewood Property Owners and Civic Association (RPOCA), a not for profit organization committed to the development of a more vibrant place to live, work, and play.

Since its inception, RPOCA has served countless property owners and residents in the Ridgewood community of Queens, New York. This first rate organization has been instrumental in the ongoing restoration of our historically rich community, proactively supporting beautification projects throughout Ridgewood and advocating against redevelopment that threatens the livelihood of our neighborhoods.

RPOCA has taken a leadership role in supporting the revitalization of our neighborhoods, educating homeowners and spearheading initiatives that protect affordable housing for working families in Ridgewood. This unwavering commitment to civic participation in local preservation efforts is commendable and has strengthened the foundation upon which the community continues to grow.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleagues in the House of Representatives to congratulate the RPOCA, its Board of Directors, membership, and this year's honorees—Angie Tantillo and Frank Cicero—upon celebrating 75 years of service to Ridgewood residents.

TRIBUTE TO THE FELIX FAMILY

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Felix Family of Viroqua, Wisconsin. On December 16, 2006, after 100 years and three generations, Felix's Men's and Women's Clothing will be closing. This store has been a pillar of Viroqua's downtown business district and an integral part of the community. Thanks to Felix's and other small businesses, Viroqua continues to have a vibrant downtown.

Steve Felix has owned and operated Ted Felix's since the early 1970s. Steve is a good friend who is not shy in imparting his advice on me during my frequent visits to Felix's. Steve told me once that back when Senator Proxmire served the people of Wisconsin, he would often stop at Felix's and shake Steve's hand. On one of these occasions, Steve scolded the Senator and told him that he needed to start dressing better in order to look like a United States Senator. Senator Proxmire bought a suit from Steve that very day, and during every occasion when he saw Steve he would ask Steve how he looked to ensure his dress was appropriate. As my wife Tawni can attest, Steve has continued this tradition by selling me suits so I am more appropriately dressed.

Small businesses like Felix's are vital to the well-being of rural America because of the unique spirit, personal service, and character they impart on small towns. They are what make shopping on our main streets an enjoyable and personal experience.

Steve's leadership and dedication, along with his wife Betty and their two children Randy and Erica, has made Viroqua and Vernon County a better place to live, work, and raise a family. I commend Steve, the Felix